

THE EXPOSITORY SERMON

I. DEFINITION OF THE EXPOSITORY SERMON.

A. What expository preaching is not.

- 1.** It is not running commentary from word to word and verse to verse without unity, outline, and persuasive drive.
- 2.** It is not rambling comment and off hand remarks about the passage apart from thorough exegesis and logical order.
- 3.** It is not a mass of disconnected suggestions and inferences based on the surface meaning of the passage.
- 4.** It is not pure exegesis no matter how scholarly if it lacks theme, thesis, outline and development.
- 5.** It is not a mere structural outline of the passage with a few supporting comments but lacking other rhetorical and homiletical elements.

B. What an expository sermon is.

- 1.** It is based on a passage in the Bible, either short or long.
- 2.** It seeks to learn the basic primary meaning of that passage.
- 3.** It relates that meaning to the context of the passage.
- 4.** It digs down deep for the timeless, universal truths stemming out of the passage.
- 5.** It organizes these truths tightly around one central theme.
- 6.** It uses the rhetorical elements of explanation, argument, illustration, and application to bring the truth of the passage home to the hearer.

7. It seeks to persuade the listener to obey the truth of the passage.

C. Expository preaching presents a complete subject.

1. A complete picture is portrayed.
2. One particle is not overly presented.
3. The theme is thoroughly exposed.

D. An exposing of the text.

1. To shed light on the text.
2. Illuminated by the Holy Spirit.

II. VARIOUS KINDS OF EXPOSITORY SERMONS.

A. Scripture words

1. Selecting one word.
2. Arranging in some kind of order the places where it occurs in the Bible.
3. Amplifying each instance.
 - a. Exhortation.
 - b. Illustration.
 - c. Application.
4. Example of.
HOPE
 - I. The source of hope - Rom. 15:4.
 - II. The strength of hope - Rom. 4:18.
 - III. The sanctifying of hope - I Jn. 3:3.

B. Scripture phrases.

1. Selecting a Scripture phrase.

2. Amplify it as in the Scripture word.

3. "I am a sinful man."

C. Exposition of a complete passage.

1. Knowledge of original tongues of Scripture.

a. Grammatical usage of words.

b. Familiarity with the way in which words and phrases are used.

2. Look for contrasts, comparisons, and parallels.

a. Both in the text and context.

b. Within the background of the whole text.

3. Rhetorical skill.

a. In composition and delivery.

b. Spiritual fervor.

1) Make the sermon alive.

2) "A thing with hands and feet."- Luther.

4. Break up the passage clause by clause.

a. Every clause may not be used

b. Breaking the passage up will help you to understand the meaning

c. The clauses can be used to form the divisions of the sermon

1) Take out the main clauses - the outstanding ones

2) Expounding on one complete thought at a time

passage

5. It may be possible to select out of the whole
one or two key verses

- a.** Use as a text to express the main thought of the entire passage
- b.** Key verses upon which the others naturally converge
- c.** Example – Ps. 121 has for its keynote the word “keep”

- 1)** The thought of God’s preserving care for Israel runs through the whole
- 2)** “The LORD is thy keeper” – v.5 is an excellent text for a sermon on the entire Psalm

GOD’S PRESERVING CARE

I. Preserve thee from evil

II. Preserve thy soul

III. Preserve thy life

(“thy
going out and thy coming in”- v. 8 , referring to
battle)

D. Courses of Expository sermons

1. The entire Bible

- a.** The Bible as History
- b.** The Bible as Literature
- c.** The Bible as Prophecy

2. Exposition of one Book of the Bible

- a.** A series of sermons or Bible Studies
- b.** Arrange it in distinct themes

- 1)** Show how one subject stands related to others

- 2) Fastening upon the key thought of the passage under exposition

c. The main theme of the Book

- 1) Find the key or overall thought
- 2) Use Scriptures within the Book to expound on the main theme

3. Study of a Bible character

a. Biographical study

- 1) Divide the life into main stages
- 2) Expound on the characters Spiritual development
- 3) Make application of the characters strengths and failures

b. Examples of the study of a Bible Character

- 1) Abraham - the exalted father
- 2) Joseph - may he add
- 3) David - the beloved

4. A group of subjects

a. Parables

b. Miracles

III. POWER OF EXPOSITORY PREACHING

A. POWER THROUGH MOTIVATION

1. Motivation from the call

And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! - Rom 10:15

a. The assurance of knowing that you are called to be God's messenger.

A preacher can rest in the fact that he knows he is called of God.

And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them - Acts 16:10

b. There is motivation from the call to feed the flock.

Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. - Acts 20:28

Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind. - 1Pe 5:2

The preacher must first be fed so that he can have something to give to others.

In feeding the 5000, Jesus first gave to the disciples and then the disciples gave to the people. The preacher has a responsibility to fulfill the call of God, and to minister to the congregation.

For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel! - 1Co 9:16

c. The call of an inner burning desire to preach the Gospel.

Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay - Jer 20:9

2. Motivation from challenge

a. The preacher must rise to the occasion to do the job he was called to do. He must be ready to preach the Gospel. There is work involved in sermon preparation. Prayer is essential to the success of the preacher.

b. The preacher must stay true to The Word in the face of opposition.

He must rightly divide The Word of Truth. It can be a challenge for the preacher to face opposition. He must be determined to please God and to realize that he can not always please man.

c. The challenge to be the preacher God has called you to be.

You must have a confidence that God will help you to preach. This comes from knowing that you are living right and that you have been faithful to prayer and study of the Word.

God will always be faithful to do His part if we are faithful to do our part. You must believe that God will help you to develop into an able Expositor of The Word of God.

3. Motivation from the congregation

- a. They expect you to be a master of the Word.

The congregation will come to hear the Word expounded upon. You need to be prepared to satisfy the Congregation's needs. You must believe that God will use you to feed the people. Proper preparation is an essential to nourish the congregation.

- b. Positive response during the preaching can greatly encourage the preacher.

Positive response helps you to know that they are receiving the Word. Amens can motivate and encourage the preacher. You can encourage the people to actively respond to the preaching of the Word.

“Somebody help me while I Preach” - L.K. Powers

- c. He is motivated through positive response after the preaching.

The preacher is motivated from seeing people pray in the altars. He is encouraged from seeing lives changed by the power of God.

- d. He is motivated from seeing visible spiritual maturity in the sheep.

It is encouraging to see the fruit of your labor. The preacher can see the people are growing in the Word. It encourages a preacher to know he is being effective.

B. POWER THROUGH ORGANIZATION

1. A sermon is an organized discourse.

The power of a sermon lies in its structure. Strong declaration is of little value without a solid message. A strong framework will result in a strong message.

2. Organization should come before argumentation, illustration, and application.

The truth should be presented in a logical manner. Organization will help you to preach the sermon in such a way that it will be received and understood by the congregation. The lawyer must have a well prepared case to deliver to the court. The preacher should also have a well prepared case to deliver to the congregation. The illustrations should be placed in a productive order that add to the sermon.

3. Organization is valuable both to the preacher and to the listener.

Organization will enable the preacher to know where he is going before he gets there. It allows for a thorough presentation of the subject. The preacher will have a clear place to end the sermon. The listener will be able to better follow an organized preacher. Organization will help the congregation to understand and to retain the message.

. 4. The elements of a well organized sermon.

a. The sermon should have a strong outline.

The outline is the basic structure of the sermon. It should have unity and progression. No sermon ever failed because it possessed a strong outline. Each main point is a part of the one theme. The main points need expansion and explanation. Secondary points elaborate the main points. Sub points are added under the secondary points making the development clearer and adding detail to the sermon. Sub points may be expanded further to provide even more detail to the sermon. The points should unfold in a clear logical order.

b. The sermon should have proportion.

There should not too much emphasis on one point. You should try to plan the approximate time allowed for each point. If you spend too much time on the first point you will not be able to properly finish the sermon. Each main point should be covered with the same amount of explanation and illustration.

c. The sermon should have climax.

The sermon is built to a main focal point. There should be a high point that will lead the people to a place of decision.

d. The sermon should reveal the major ideas of the passage.

The theme should always be taken from the text of the sermon. Remember you are called to preach the Word. You should explain the truth that is contained in your text. The sermon is organized around the text.

5. The guarantee of sound organization lies in the basis of the theme, thesis statement, and key word system.

a. The theme is the subject upon which the preacher plans to speak.

The subject will answer the question: "What am I Talking about?" The subject of a sermon should never be only one word. Single words are too vague to form a complete subject. Single words like worship, faith, and love are too broad for a sermon subject. The subject needs to be clearly expressed to form a complete thought. The theme expresses the purpose the preacher has in mind. You should be able to answer the question: "What am I going to say?" before you get to the pulpit.

Examples of themes:

- > The Source of Faith
- > The power of salvation
- > Healing is for all
- > A need for miracles
- > The necessity of fasting

b. The thesis statement is the sermon expressed in one complete sentence.

The thesis statement is the term used to refer to the one complete sentence that will define the subject to be preached. The thesis statement adds a predicate to the theme.

The thesis statement answers the question: “What am I going to say, about what I am going to say?”

c. The key word system identifies the key words of the text.

Identifying the key words of the text will help you to understand the major ideas of the passage. You should know the meaning of these words. The key words will help you to express the theme of the passage.

C. Power through explanation

1. You should explain the meaning of the passage.

a. Reveal the hidden meaning contained in the passage.

b. Make the passage applicable to today.

2. The reasons for the need of explanation.

a. Many people are not aware of the different lands of the Bible.

b. To make people aware of the customs of the people.

c. To explain things not familiar to people today.

For example Matthew sat at the seat of customs. Some people may not know that he was a tax collector. As a tax collector his pay from the Romans was not his only source of income. He was expected to add money for himself thus causing his own people to despise him. Yet this despised man was chosen to be an Apostle of Jesus.

3. Various areas of explanation.

a. To explain the historical setting of the passage.

You need to know your facts. There is archeological support of the Bible.

True history is in agreement with the Bible.

It is essential to know the historical setting of Daniel chapter 5 to glean the full meaning of the passage. Babylon had been under siege by the Medo-Persians for two years prior to the beginning of the chapter. Yet the leaders are so unconcerned about this threat they are getting drunk and having a party.

b. To explain geographical factors of the passage.

It is necessary to know certain details of the land to gain a better understanding of the meaning of the passage.

c. To explain cultural considerations of the time.

d. To explain any doctrinal truths that are found within the text.

e.. To explain grammatical usage of words in the text.

Explain the meaning of words and how they are used in the text. Consider the original usage of the words that may be different from today. Explain the tense of the word and how that is important to the meaning of the text.

f. To explain biographical facts about the people in the text.